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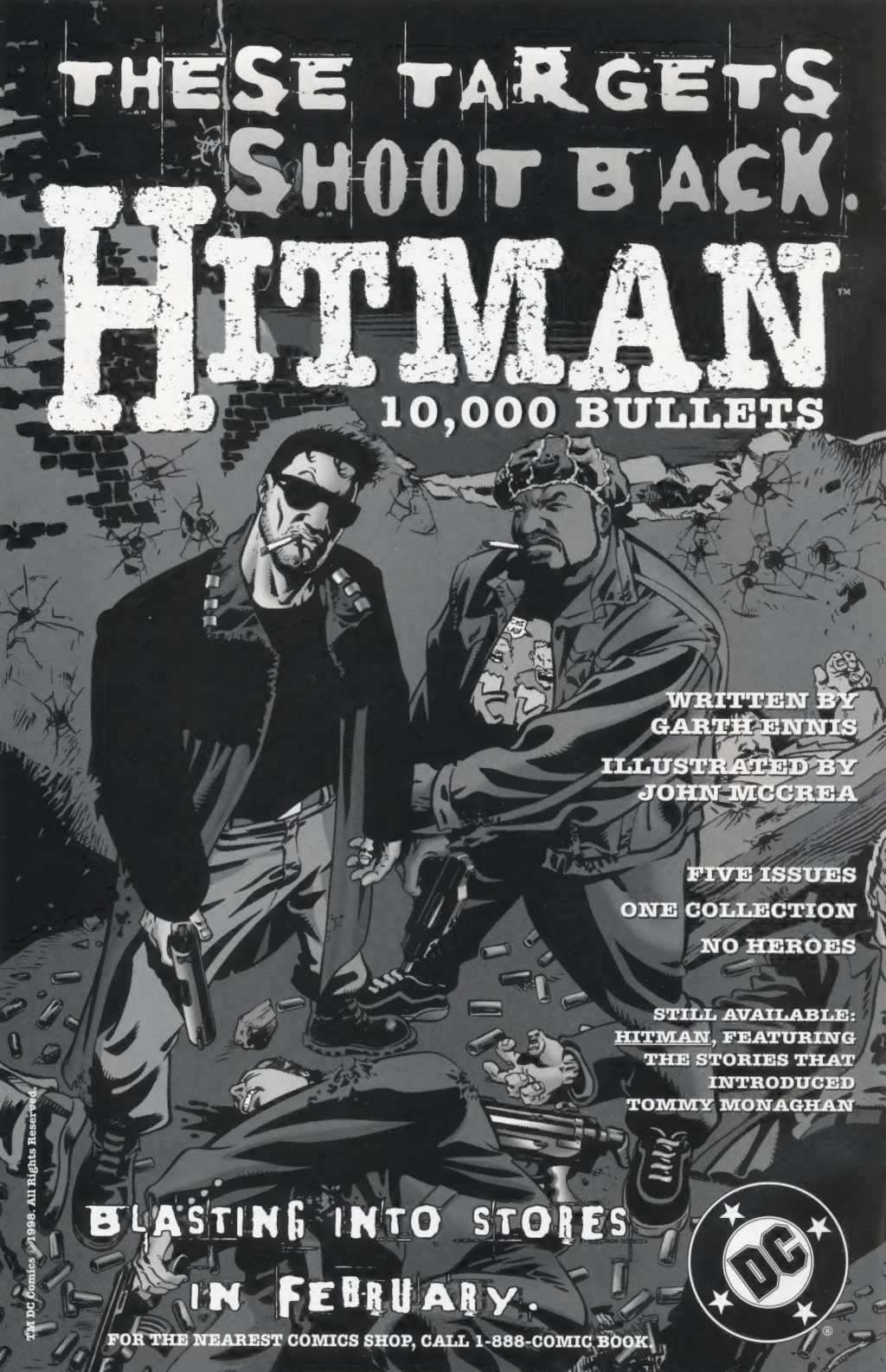
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SUPERMAN, THE MAN OF ENERGY, AND SLAM BRADLEY, CRIME CHASER TOGETHER IN...

OPERATION: INK!

The startling ORIGIN story of the elusive INKLING!
FZZAT!
FZZAT!
POLICE! HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
PKOW! PKOW!
METRO WAS HERE
STUART "88 FINGERS" IMMONEN - writer
GREG "LAWMAN" LAND - penciler
JOSE "JUNIOR G- MAN" MARZAN JR. inker
BILL "OFFICER" OAKLEY - letterer
GLENN "GUMSHOE" WHITMORE - colorist
"DETECTIVE" DIGITAL CHAMELEON separations
MAUREEN "BUBBLES" McTIGUE assistant
JOEY "THE JURY" CAVALIERI cop

SUPERMAN created by by JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER

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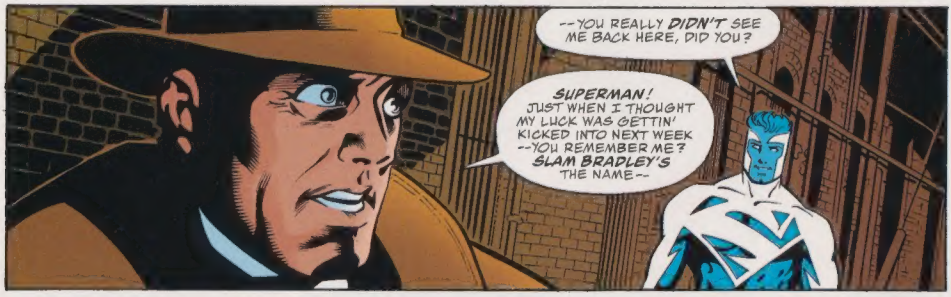
BLAST IT! MISSED! CAN'T BE ;huf; TOO FAR 'ROUND THE CORNER ;huf;

--NOTHIN'! ;whew; STREET'S ABOUT AS EMPTY AS A WINO'S BOTTLE ON A SATURDAY NIGHT!
JUST ME AND THE CHILLY WINTER WIND--
VISIT METRO FEST
DINER


--YOU REALLY DIDN'T SEE ME BACK HERE, DID YOU?
SUPERMAN! JUST WHEN I THOUGHT MY LUCK WAS GETTIN' KICKED INTO NEXT WEEK --YOU REMEMBER ME? SLAM BRADLEY'S THE NAME--

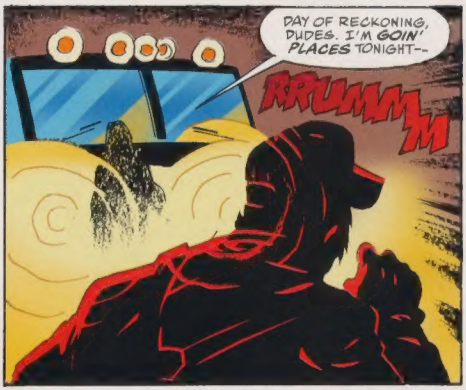
SURE, SLAM. I REMEMBER YOU SHOT AT ME LAST TIME WE MET, TOO. *
WELL, NOBODY GETS THE DROP ON BRADLEY. NOT MUCH, LEASTWISE.
* SUPERMAN #44. --.44 CALIBER CAVALIERI.

LISSEN, SUPERMAN, I'M IN KIND OF A SPOT, AND I FIGGER YOU CAN BAIL ME OUT.
SINCE YOU FILLED OUT THE RAT SHEET ON THE GOON I GOT MARKED, MEBBE YOU CAN HELP ME CATCH--

"--THE INKLING!"
IT MATTERS NOT TO A MAN GRIPPED IN THE THROES OF MADNESS THAT THE RICHES ARE STOLEN GOODS.
NOR DOES HE NOTICE THAT THEY SLIP FROM HIS GRASP--
--AS EASILY AS HE SLIPS THROUGH THIS SHADOW OF PERCEPTION WE CALL REALITY.
FOR THE INKLING IS ON THE BRINK OF AN ABYSS OF UNREASON.
MAX'S PET STORE
WHEN I WAS A LITTLE BOY, I WASHED MY MOTHER'S DISHES -- NOW I AM A GREAT BIG BOY, I ROLL IN GOLDEN RICHES!
AND DON'T SLEEP WITH THE FISHES!
MOST OF THE TIME, HE DOESN'T REMEMBER WHY...
...AND MOST OF THE TIME HE'S BETTER OFF WITH HIS MADNESS.
MAX'S PET STORE
SORRY... WE'RE CLOSED
3

FOR THE MEMORY IS ALMOST TOO PAINFUL TO ENDURE.
CHIP'S GOTTA SMIRK ON TONIGHT, BOYS. MAKE A SCORE, YOUNG'UN?
YO, DUDES, GOTTA CHECK IT. MIGHT NOT EAT TONIGHT, BUT I GOT STYLIN' FEET.

HOMEYS ON THE EAST SIDE COUGH UP BIG NOTES FOR THESE BABIES. ALL THE NUBILES GONNA HANG WITH LI'L CHIP.


DAY OF RECKONING, DUDES. I'M GOIN' PLACES TONIGHT--
RRUMMM

S.T.A.R. LABS? THINK SOMEONE MADE A WRONG TURN?
S.T.A.R. LABS
STAY CLEAR, BOY. I HEERD THE DEVIL HISSELF TAKES MANY UNAWARES.

WHO'S GONNA BE A TIGER, AND WHO'S GONNA BE A KITTEN?
WHO WANTS TO TAKE A RIDE WITH THE CANDYMAN?

DUDE, YOU'RE LOOKIN' AT HIM. I AIN'T AFRAID OF JACK--
--AN' IF THE DEVIL'S DUMB ENOUGH TO WANT ME--

HEY, MOM, can I keep him?

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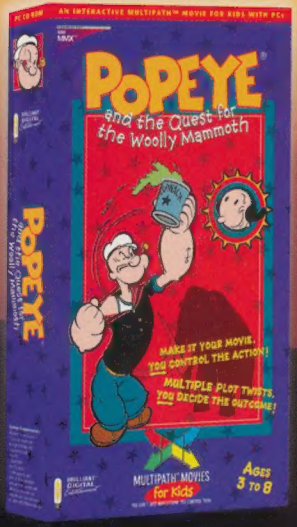
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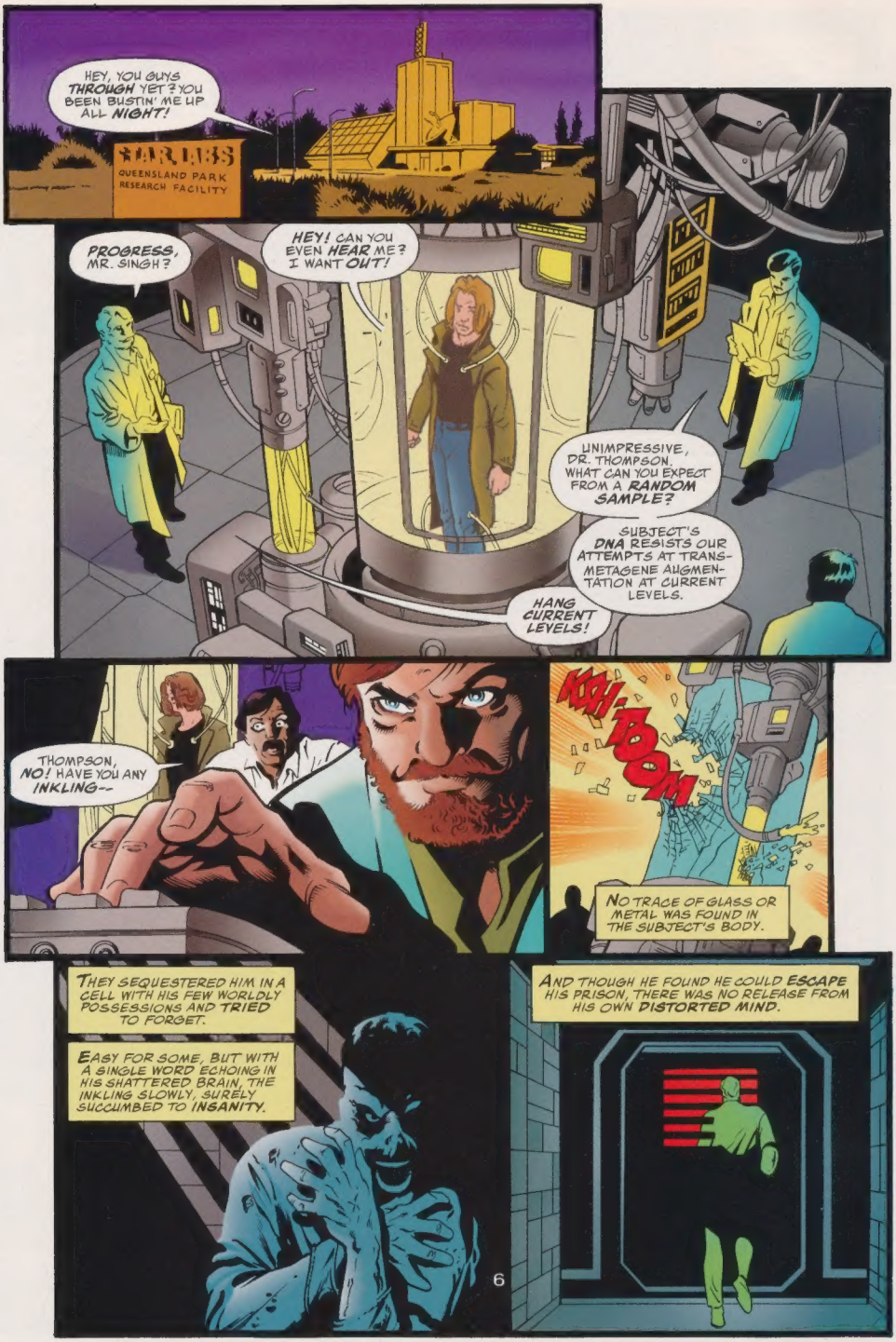
"--HE CAN COME'N GET ME."
WE'RE CLOSE NOW, SUPERMAN. I CAN ALMOST SMELL THE RAT!
IF THE TWO OF US PULL TOGETHER, THE INKLING'LL BE IN STIR BEFORE LAST CALL!
LISTEN, SLAM --THERE ARE SOME THINGS I NEED TO ATTEND TO--PERSONAL THINGS...

I GET IT. REAL HERO STUFF, YOU MEAN. OLD BRADLEY GETS THE BRUSH-OFF-- HE'S STRICTLY SMALL FRY.
WELL, EXCUSE ME, HERO. THIS WASHED-UP GUMSHOE STILL HAS A JOB TO DO.
I CAME TO METROPOLIS TO FIND SUPERMAN RED--
--JIMMY'S SCOURING THE WILD AREA, AND GUARDIAN'S GOT CADMUS COVERED. THE SITUATION'S UNDER CONTROL.
RED AND I DON'T NEED TO BE TOGETHER-- IN FACT, OUR SHORT HISTORY SEEMS TO PROVE OTHERWISE.
SWAN

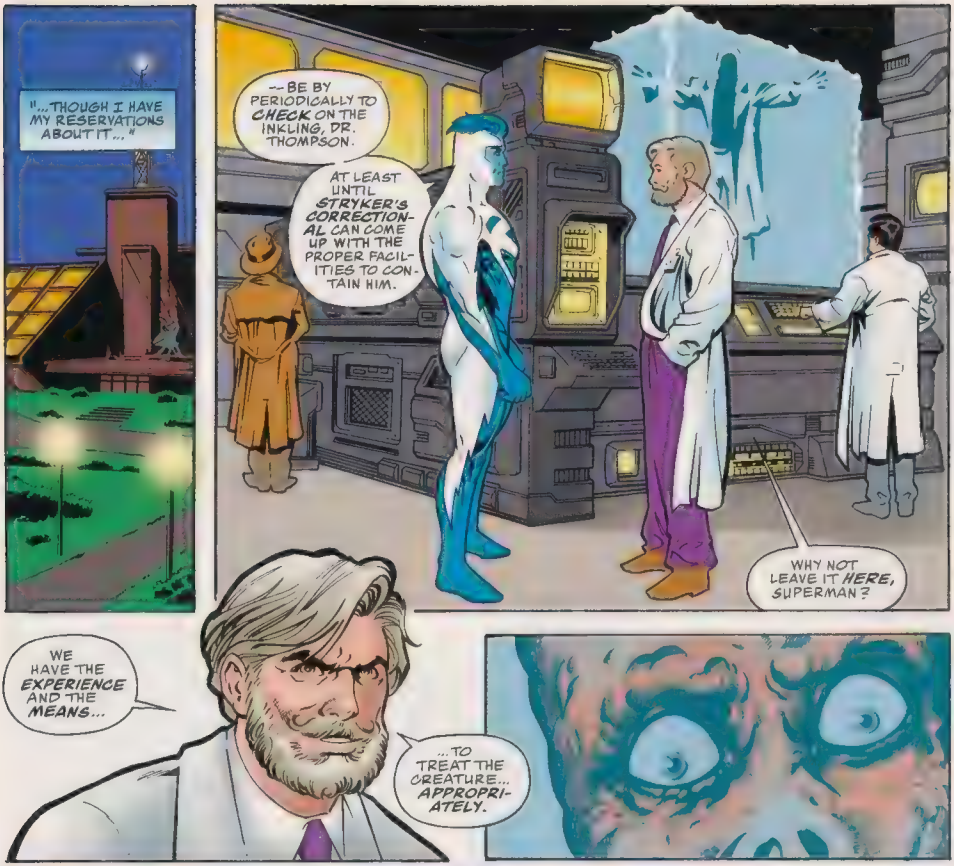
HAS MY ATTITUDE CHANGED ALONG WITH MY POWERS? DOESN'T A HERO PUT HIS PUTY BEFORE PERSONAL PROBLEMS?
UH... SLAM? HOLD ON A SECOND...


HEY, YOU GUYS THROUGH YET? YOU BEEN BUSTIN' ME UP ALL NIGHT!
STAR LABS
QUEENSLAND PARK RESEARCH FACILITY
PROGRESS, MR. SINGH?
HEY! CAN YOU EVEN HEAR ME? I WANT OUT!
UNIMPRESSIVE, DR. THOMPSON. WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM A RANDOM SAMPLE?
SUBJECT'S DNA RESISTS OUR ATTEMPTS AT TRANS-METAGENE AUGMENTATION AT CURRENT LEVELS.
HANG CURRENT LEVELS!
THOMPSON, NO! HAVE YOU ANY INKLING--
KOH-BOOM
NO TRACE OF GLASS OR METAL WAS FOUND IN THE SUBJECT'S BODY.
THEY SEQUESTERED HIM IN A CELL WITH HIS FEW WORLDLY POSSESSIONS AND TRIED TO FORGET.
EASY FOR SOME, BUT WITH A SINGLE WORD ECHOING IN HIS SHATTERED BRAIN, THE INKLING SLOWLY, SURELY SUCCUMBED TO INSANITY.
AND THOUGH HE FOUND HE COULD ESCAPE HIS PRISON, THERE WAS NO RELEASE FROM HIS OWN DISTORTED MIND.

I KNEW YOU COULDN'T REST UNTIL THIS CASE WAS SOLVED, SUPES. WE'RE THE SAME, Y'KNOW?
IT'S CRIME-- IT GETS IN YOUR BLOOD AND DON'T LET GO...
THE INKLING HASN'T BEEN A... PRESSING MATTER FOR ME, SLAM. I'VE... HAD A LOT ON MY MIND, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH.
BUT OF COURSE I PREFER TO SEE JUSTICE SERVED.
I JUST WISH I COULD GUARANTEE MY HELP. YOU SEE, THE INKLING ESCAPED ME PRETTY EASILY BEFORE.
YEAH, RIGHT. YOUR REPORT SAID HE JUMPED THROUGH A WALL OR SOMETHIN'.
I WOULDA THOUGHT YOU'D BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO NAB THIS CREEP WITH YOUR NEW POWERS-- WHY DIDN'T YOU ZAP HIM WITH SOME HIGH VOLTAGE?
LETHAL FORCE IS A LAST RESORT, SLAM. IN ANY SITUATION.
A CROOK'S A CROOK, BIG BLUE...
... AND YOU DON'T HESITATE WHEN YOU GET ONE IN YOUR SIGHTS.
7

NO. THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER WAY. BESIDES, DO YOU REALLY THINK IT WOULD DO ANY GOOD?
LOOK AT HIM. HE'S HARMLESS. IF THERE WAS A WAY TO CONTAIN HIM...!
HOW? HE CAN WALK THROUGH A BRICK WALL! NOTHIN' SOLID CAN HOLD HIM!
OF COURSE! NOTHING SOLID!
HE FLED WITHOUT THE GOODS LAST TIME BECAUSE HE COULDN'T TAKE THEM WITH HIM!
"WHEN I GIVE THE WORD, SLAM, DISTRACT THE INKLING!"
HEY, YOU'RE UGLY AND YOUR MOTHER DRESSES YOU FUNNY!
eh?
A DILLAR, A DOLLAR, A TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR. WHAT MAKES YOU COME SO SOON?
YOU USED TO COME AT--
--AT--?
--AAHH!
TINK
CHINK
8

ALL RIGHT, HERO, I'LL BITE. WHY CAN'T HE GET OUT? HOW DID YOU DO IT?
I GUESSED, NATURALLY.
NO! QUITE CONTRARY! HOME AGAIN!
HOME AGAIN!
WHEN I REALIZED THE INKLING'S ABILITY TO PASS THROUGH MATTER DIDN'T INCLUDE THE THINGS HE CARRIED--
--I ASSUMED HE HAD SOME KIND OF UNSTABLE MOLECULAR STRUCTURE INSTEAD OF A "PHASING" POWER LIKE MY OWN.
BEFORE, I TRIED TO STOP HIM WITH A SOLID ENERGY WALL. BUT THE MOLECULES IN THIS CONSTRUCT ARE CONSTANTLY IN MOTION.
KINDA LIKE... BEIN' CAUGHT IN AN UNDERTOW?
MORE LIKE A MAZE OF INTER-MESHED GEARS.
IN ANY CASE, I CAN ONLY THINK OF ONE PLACE TO TAKE HIM...


"...THOUGH I HAVE MY RESERVATIONS ABOUT IT..."
--BE BY PERIODICALLY TO CHECK ON THE INKLING, DR. THOMPSON.
AT LEAST UNTIL STRYKER'S CORRECTIONAL CAN COME UP WITH THE PROPER FACILITIES TO CONTAIN HIM.
WHY NOT LEAVE IT HERE, SUPERMAN?
WE HAVE THE EXPERIENCE AND THE MEANS...
...TO TREAT THE CREATURE... APPROPRIATELY.

MINUTES LATER.
THOMPSON'S A BAD ONE, I'M SURE OF IT. BUT S.T.A.R.'S THE ONLY PLACE FOR THE INKLING FOR NOW...
THERE AIN'T ANY EASY CHOICES, SUPES. THANKS FOR THE ASSIST.
ANYTIME, SLAM.

I CAN'T HELP WORRYING ABOUT MY RED COUNTERPART, BUT I HAVE TO TRUST THAT IF WE'RE THE SAME MAN--

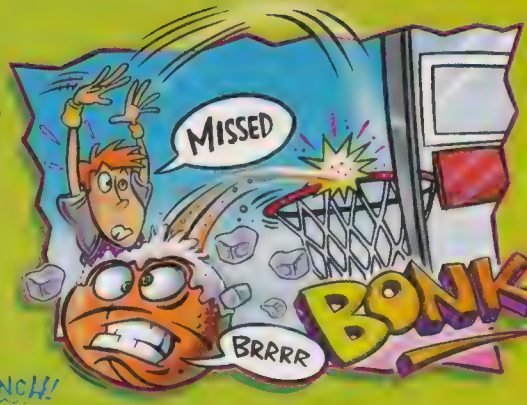
199? Mars Inc

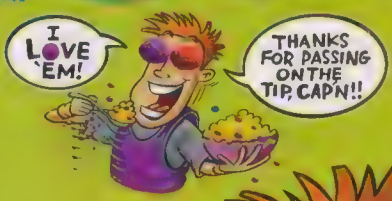
THINK ABOUT IT-

CAN A FRIEND WHO ASKS YOU TO SHARE REALLY BE CALLED A FRIEND?

two for me. none for you.

MY HOT SHOT HAD GONE COLD. THEN THE CAP'N AND SOME CRUNCHBERRIES GAVE ME A HAND!!





You and the Cap'N Make it Happen!

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"--NO POWER CAN SEPARATE US FOR LONG."
Is the MILLENNIUM GUARD ready?
Are you buoyed above your appointed GEOGRAPHY, my brethren?
YES, AMUN. HUNAB AND DAGDA AWAIT THE FINAL ORDER. NONE CAN MISCARRY OUR GRAVE DEED NOW.
AYE. BY THE GIANTS, LET THE EARTH BE PURGED ANEW!
OUCH! THAT'S GOTTA HURT! LET'S DELAY THE END OF THE WORLD UNTIL WE FIND OUT WHAT DID HAPPEN TO SUPERMAN RED...

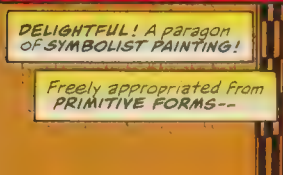
SUPERMAN RED dares to peer behind the closed doors of the world of modern art and finds himself between a CROOK and a HARD CASE in...

A PERSISTENCE OF YOU

STUART IMMONEN
writer / penciller
JOSÉ MARZÁN JR. - inker
BILL OAKLEY - letterer
GLENN WHITMORE - colorist
DIGITAL CHAMELEON - seps
MAUREEN McTIGUE
assistant editor
JOEY CAVALIERI - dada

SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

HOURS EARLIER, OUTSIDE METROPOLIS CITY LIMITS...
SOON GIANTS will walk the earth once again-- in this age's TWILIGHT and the new age's DAWN!
--WHAT'S HAPPENING?--
--GOIN' ON?--



uhhn!
MILLENNIUM GUARD... REALLY TOOK ME OUT THIS TIME. LIKE... uhn! THEY DIDN'T JUST WANT TO-- THEY HAD TO.
GOTTA FIND BLUE. I'M... IN NO CONDITION TO STOP THEM.
--SPACEMEN WASTED SUPERMAN!
NOT THE REAL DEAL-- HE'S ALL RED'N STUFF!
LOOK OUT, YOU LOT!
CAN'T YOU SEE THE MAN'S STOVE-UP?
DON'T PAY THEM NO MIND, SUPERMAN-- GWEN RYAN'S HERE TO HELP!
I'M... OKAY. SEE TO THE OTHERS. THE FIRE...
ALREADY CALLED 911. THE REST IS UP TO ME AN' MY INSURANCE AGENT.
WELL... THANKS.
DON'T THANK ME-- I'M THE ONE WHO GETS TO PUT HER ARMS AROUND--
--WHAT NOW?
VRROAR!
HEY, BIG GUY! JIMMY OLSEN'S HACK HAS ROOM FOR ONE MORE!
RROARR!
BRILLIANT! An unparalleled exploration of COLOR and VALUE!
An intellect made manifest in TWO DIMENSIONS!
It will serve my COLLECTION well...

THANKS, JIMMY-- I COULD USE A LIFT...
HEY, WATCH IT! YOU'RE STEPPIN' ON MY DASHIKI!
...AND THANK YOU, GWEN. I NEED MORE FANS LIKE YOU.
FROM THE GUY WHO'S SAVED THE WORLD MORE TIMES THAN I CAN COUNT? DON'T THANK ME, MISTER.
"JUST KEEP DOIN' WHATCHER DOIN."
WHERE TO, SUPERMAN?
I NEED THE OTHER SUPERMAN-- THE BLUE ONE.
VARROOM!
OH, HE WENT TO METROPOLIS TO FIND YOU.
ME AND MISA SPLIT FROM GUARDIAN, ONCE WE HEARD ABOUT THE MILLENNIUM GUARD. I GUESS THEY ESCAPED THE DRAGON'S TEETH AT CADMUS...
...WHOA, SORRY IF I'M STARING! I'M STILL FLIPPING OVER THE IDEA OF TWO SUPERMEN! NOT LIKE I'VE SEEN YOU TOGETHER OR ANYTHING...
"SOON AS WE FIND HIM, JIMMY, YOU CAN TAKE A PICTURE."
LOIS! CHECK OUT THESE IMAGES!
SOMEONE'S BEEN CROSS-POSTING PHOTOS OF THE U.K. SKY TO THE CONSPIRACY NEWSGROUP.
APPROPRIATE USE OF COMPANY TIME, RON TROUPE.
THIS IS NEWS, LOIS! POSTINGS ON ALT.OS.PARANET CONFIRM THAT AT 23:38 GMT THE SKIES OVER ENGLAND AND EGYPT LIT UP LIKE NOON!
WE LANES ARE CYNICS BY NATURE, RON. NORMALLY, I WOULDN'T BELIEVE A WORD--
--BUT I JUST SAW WGBS FOOTAGE OF SOMETHING SIMILAR OVER MEXICO.
YEAH, SOMETHING WEIRD'S HAPPENING.
This SPATIAL DIFFIDENCE I find particularly appealing..
The artist provokes by simply addressing the medium for what it is--
--PIGMENT on a SURFACE. What JOY in an aggregate viewpoint!

IT'S A BIRD!
IT'S A PLANE!
IT'S SUPERMAN!
AND HE'S BACK

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The Comics Magazine

5TH ANNUAL FAN AWARDS BALLOT

The 5th Annual *Wizard* Fan Awards are upon us and it's time for you, the comic fans of the world, to determine the best of the best! Comic fan voting will determine the winners of these prestigious awards. Nominees are provided as determined through a "Wizard World" America Online poll. If you don't like any of the nominees, feel free to vote for anybody or anything you want...including the li'l diddy you're holding in your hands!

You can use this ballot (or a photocopy) to vote, as long as you follow these rules and regulations:

1) **Only material that shipped in the calendar year 1997 is eligible.**
2) **You may vote for only *one* entry in any category. Multiple votes are all disqualified.**
3) **You need not vote for a listed nominee. Write-in candidates are perfectly acceptable.**
4) **You may send in only *one* ballot. All multiple ballots are disqualified.**

FAVORITE WRITER
- ❑ Kurt Busiek
- ❑ Peter David
- ❑ Garth Ennis
- ❑ Grant Morrison
- ❑ Mark Waid
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE PENCILER
- ❑ Adam Kubert
- ❑ Jim Lee
- ❑ Joe Madureira
- ❑ Marc Silvestri
- ❑ Michael Turner
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE INKER
- ❑ Batt
- ❑ Mark Farmer
- ❑ Todd McFarlane
- ❑ Jimmy Palmiotti
- ❑ Tim Townsend
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE PAINTER
- ❑ Joe Jusko
- ❑ Glenn Fabry
- ❑ Glen Orbik
- ❑ Jerry Ordway
- ❑ Alex Ross
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE COLORIST
- ❑ Digital Chameleon
- ❑ Electric Crayon
- ❑ Liquid Graphics
- ❑ Patrick Martin
- ❑ Tom McCraw
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE LETTERER
- ❑ Todd Klein
- ❑ Tom Orzechowski
- ❑ Clem Robins
- ❑ Richard Starkings and Comicraft
- ❑ John Workman
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE EDITOR
- ❑ Axel Alonso
- ❑ Tom Brevoort
- ❑ Kevin Dooley
- ❑ Archie Goodwin
- ❑ Bob Harras
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE HERO
- ❑ Batman
- ❑ Hulk
- ❑ Spawn
- ❑ Spider-Man
- ❑ Wolverine
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE HEROINE
- ❑ Catwoman
- ❑ Psylocke
- ❑ Rogue
- ❑ Supergirl
- ❑ Witchblade
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE VILLAIN
- ❑ Baron Zemo
- ❑ Bastion
- ❑ Darkseid
- ❑ Dr. Doom
- ❑ Holiday
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE SUPPORTING CHARACTER
- ❑ Cassidy
- ❑ Commissioner Gordon
- ❑ Franklin Richards
- ❑ Moira McTaggert
- ❑ Oracle
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE ONGOING SERIES
- ❑ *Astro City*
- ❑ *Incredible Hulk*
- ❑ *JLA*
- ❑ *Spawn*
- ❑ *Uncanny X-Men*
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE ONE-SHOT OR MINI-SERIES
- ❑ *Batman: The Long Halloween*
- ❑ *Heroes Reborn: The Return*
- ❑ Tangent Comics
- ❑ *Uncle Sam*
- ❑ *X-Men/WildC.A.T.s*
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE PUBLISHER
- ❑ DC
- ❑ Marvel
- ❑ Todd McFarlane Productions
- ❑ Top Cow Productions
- ❑ WildStorm Productions
- ❑ write-in_____

FAVORITE COMIC MERCHANDISE
- ❑ Dark Knight Returns 10th Anniversary statue, DC Retail Products
- ❑ Green Goblin bust, Legends in 3 Dimensions
- ❑ Harley Quinn action figure, Kenner
- ❑ Legion of Super-Heroes Flight Ring, DC Retail Products
- ❑ Spider-Man web-shooters, Toy Biz
- ❑ write-in_____

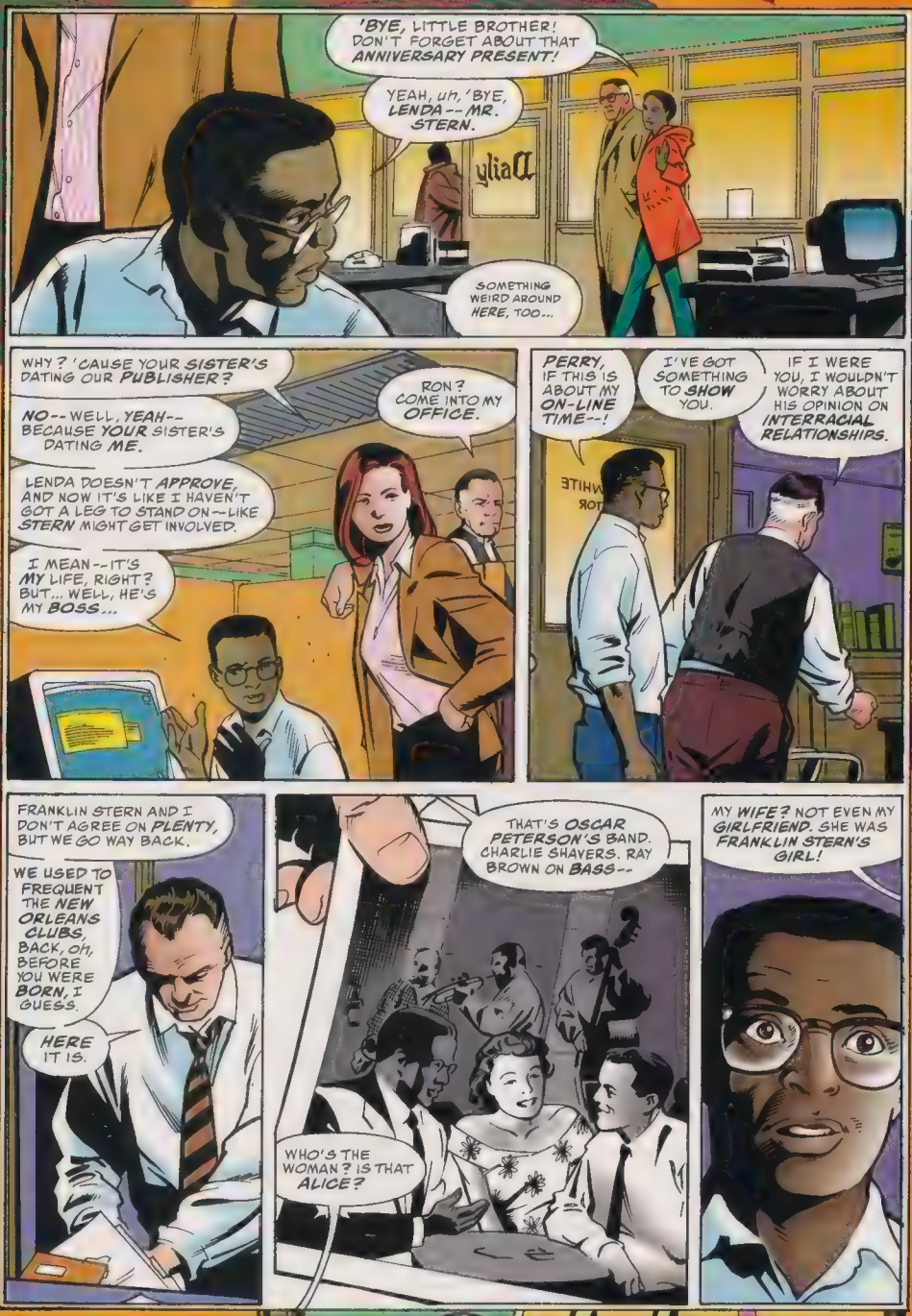
FAVORITE COMIC TV OR MOVIE PROJECT
- ❑ "The Batman/Superman Adventures"
- ❑ "Space Ghost Coast to Coast"
- ❑ "Spawn" HBO cartoon
- ❑ "Spawn" movie
- ❑ "Spider-Man: The Animated Series"
- ❑ write-in_____

COMICS' GREATEST MOMENT—1997
- ❑ The "A" returns to Captain America's mask, *Captain America* #7
- ❑ Marvel's heroes return to the Marvel Universe, *Heroes Reborn: The Return* #4
- ❑ Return of Magneto, *Uncanny X-Men* #350
- ❑ Superman wrestles the angel Asmodel in hand-to-hand combat, *JLA* #7
- ❑ Thunderbolts revealed as the Masters of Evil, *Thunderbolts* #1
- ❑ write-in_____

GET YOUR BALLOT IN BY
February 27, 1998

Send your ballot to:
***Wizard* Fan Awards**
c/o Wizard Press
P.O. Box 118
Congers, NY 10920-0118

Move it, cowboy! That deadline's February 27, 1998, and all ballots postmarked after that date are null and void!


'BYE, LITTLE BROTHER! DON'T FORGET ABOUT THAT ANNIVERSARY PRESENT!
YEAH, uh, 'BYE, LENDA--MR. STERN.
SOMETHING WEIRD AROUND HERE, TOO...
WHY? 'CAUSE YOUR SISTER'S DATING OUR PUBLISHER?
NO--WELL, YEAH--BECAUSE YOUR SISTER'S DATING ME.
LENDA DOESN'T APPROVE, AND NOW IT'S LIKE I HAVEN'T GOT A LEG TO STAND ON--LIKE STERN MIGHT GET INVOLVED.
I MEAN--IT'S MY LIFE, RIGHT? BUT... WELL, HE'S MY BOSS...
RON? COME INTO MY OFFICE.
PERRY, IF THIS IS ABOUT MY ON-LINE TIME--!
I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU.
IF I WERE YOU, I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT HIS OPINION ON INTERRACIAL RELATIONSHIPS.
FRANKLIN STERN AND I DON'T AGREE ON PLENTY, BUT WE GO WAY BACK.
WE USED TO FREQUENT THE NEW ORLEANS CLUBS, BACK, OH, BEFORE YOU WERE BORN, I GUESS.
HERE IT IS.
THAT'S OSCAR PETERSON'S BAND. CHARLIE SHAVERS. RAY BROWN ON BASS--
WHO'S THE WOMAN? IS THAT ALICE?
MY WIFE? NOT EVEN MY GIRLFRIEND. SHE WAS FRANKLIN STERN'S GIRL!
SO, SKIN-MAN, STEALING PROPERTIES AGAIN, HUH?

JIMMY, WHY DON'T YOU PULL OVER? I'VE GOT MY STRENGTH BACK. I'LL CONTINUE THE SEARCH ON MY OWN.
I KNOW INTERGANG'S ON THE LOOKOUT FOR YOU--YOU'RE NOT SAFE IN METROPOLIS.
NO WAY, SUPERMAN. I PROMISED TO HELP, AND I WILL.
I'LL SAY.
SKREEECH!
THOUGHT YOU COULD HELP YOURSELF, RIGHT UNDER BOSS MOXIE'S NOSE, HUH?
YA GOT A BLACK MARKET ART OPERATION, SKIN MAN? PULLIN' JOBS BEHIND INTERGANG'S BACK?
WHAT WAS YA GONNA DO WIT' THE PAINTINGS, HUH?
This isn't your concern, Moxie. You couldn't POSSIBLY understand. This isn't an OPERATION--it's for ME.
FER YOU, HUH?
I'M FEELIN' KINDA GENEROUS MYSELF...
"MACHINE" GUNN HERE'S GOT A LITTLE SOMETHIN' FER YA, TOO.
GIVE IT TO HIM, MIKE.

BRAKKETA-BRAK-BRAKKETA!
20th Century PAINTING
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METROPOLIS MUSEUM OF ART
JIMMY--
I HEARD, SUPERMAN! I'M COMING, TOO!
Work.
MISA, YOU STAY WITH THE BIKE!
WHY NOT? IT'S THE MOST FUN I'VE HAD ALL DAY.
THRAK-KOOM!
SUPERMAN?
Oh, boy. HOPE I REMEMBER MY FIRST AID TRAINING!
WHAT ON--?
LOOK WHO JOINED THE PARTY! YOU WANT A PIECE OF THIS ACTION, SUPERMAN?
'CAUSE I'LL SERVE IT UP TO YOU!

MOXIE, THE ONLY THING YOU'LL SERVE IS A LONG SENTENCE!
GUNN! WHADDAYA DOIN'? PLUG HIM!
SORRY, BOSS! SKIN MAN CLOCKED ME GOOD!
BRATTABRATTA!
HE MUST'VE RATTLED YOUR BRAIN, "MACHINE" GUNN!
BULLETS HAVEN'T STOPPED ME SINCE DAY ONE!
BUT ENOUGH OF THAT OLD SONG--
-- HOW ABOUT SOME HEAVY METAL?
THIS WON'T HOLD ME FOR LONG, MISTER!

LONG ENOUGH IF IT SHUTS YOU UP FOR A MINUTE...
JOKE YOUR WAY OUT OF A FLAME WALL, LAUGHING BOY!
MOXIE!
You DARE try to escape without FACING me?
You SPOIL my plans --accuse me of VIOLATING our trust-- is there no honor LEFT among thieves?
NO, SKIN MAN-- IT AIN'T LIKE THAT-- I SWEAR!
I TIRE of Fighting you, Boss Moxie! It ends NOW! I might be incarcerated tonight, but it will be with YOUR countenance!
Now I will control Intergang and her interests!
ROU-- ROUGHHOUSE--
muuhhhhh...
KRUNK!

ROUGH-HOUSE...YOU KILLED HIM!
YEAH... :kaff: BUT WE ALL KNOW THE SKIN MAN COMES BACK...
MORE THAN I CAN SAY FOR YOU, MOXIE!
AW, FER-- SUPERMAN!
WHY DIDN'T YOU DOPES TAKE HIM OUT?!
HEY, SUPES, THE POLICE ARE ON THEIR WAY--
INTERGANG?
OLSEN'S HERE? THIS TEARS IT!
YOU'RE DEAD, MR. ACTION! DEAD!!
WHAT'S YOUR HANGUP, RED? THIS GUY'S OFF TO THE JUG, RIGHT?
MISA, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THAT'S BOSS MOXIE! HE'LL GET OUT! AND WHEN HE DOES--
--HE'LL COME FOR ME!

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IS THAT ALL?
HEY! WHAT'S SHE DOIN'?
SUPERMAN! YOU AIN'T GONNA LET HER SHOOT US WIT' DAT ROD, ARE YA?
I WOULDN'T RECOMMEND IT, MISA!
boop bip bip
WELL...
OKAY.
YAAH!!
FWEEEE
I--I'M OKAY?
I WOULDN'T GO THAT FAR, BUT AS FAR AS THEY'RE CONCERNED, YOU'RE COMPLETELY INVISIBLE!
THEY CAN'T SEE YOU, HEAR YOU--LIKE YOU NEVER EXISTED! COME TO THINK OF IT, NOT MUCH DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE!

MISA, I COULD KISS YOU!
PROMISES, PROMISES! ANYHOW, I WAS SICK OF YOUR "WANTED MAN" ROUTINE!
AFTER WE DELIVER THESE THUGS TO THE AUTHORITIES, WE'LL FIND SUPERMAN BLUE!
HE MAY NOT KNOW IT, BUT WE HAVE UNFINISHED BUSINESS--

"--WITH THE MILLENNIUM GUARD!"
DESCEND, my brethren. The APPOINTED HOUR is at hand.
FIND THINE APPOINTED CONVERGENCE--
KRK-THOW!
--ON MOUNTAIN, BARROW, AND SAND.
KRRUMBLE!
"AND OPEN THE LEYS OF THE LAND!"
CONTINUED NEXT WEEK IN MAN OF STEEL #78!

RE: ACTION

DC COMICS
1700 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY
10019

ACTION COMICS #738

Well, it seems Stuart Immonen's writing debut in ACTION #738 was a hit with just about all of you. Let's take a look at the comments...

Dear Re:Action:

ACTION #738 (geez, that's a big number) was another satisfying story from you Super-folks. You guys don't seem able to do anything less, and now I find myself going from being mildly interested in the "new" Superman to becoming a full-fledged fan of your titles. I never thought that would happen.

Stuart Immonen seems to be almost as good a writer as he is an artist. I say "almost" because his artwork is simply incredible, especially the facial features. His work is much better and consistent than that of most so-called "hot" artists out there right now. I especially liked the humorous first page; it was a nice lead-in.

Inkling looks very cool, but his rhyming is poor. Haven't we seen enough rhyming characters in comics already? The Cyborg's a personal favorite of mine, but I was kind of hoping you'd leave him at the Promethean Wall a little while longer. Oh well, as long as you do something interesting with him. Not sure about the Jimmy subplot, though, especially that odd ending...

The absolute best thing about this issue was the interaction between the characters, especially Clark and Lois. These two just seem to bounce right off each other, and I loved the line, "—can't believe I didn't figure it out! All that 'Superman told me' jazz...' " Just a regular morning conversation between these two.

Well, I just want you to know you're all doing a superb job. Especially you, Stuart. Keep it up!

AARON PETERSON
BOONE, IA

Thanks, Aaron. Stuart the writer may indeed have a lot to prove with Stuart the artist, but he's quickly showing everyone he's up to the task! And ***too many*** *rhyming characters? There ain't enough, if it's us you ask! Get it? "Task" and "ask"...?*

**Ahem* Moving right along...*

Hey, Super-Team:

Stuart Immonen's first issue of ACTION (#738) as writer/artist was cool. I think Meander is an excellent villain. He's crazy like the Joker and, more important, Superman can't simply catch him or beat him up; he has to think. This is a great change from the old villain that gets beat up in the one issue.

And now for some suggestions. I'd like to see Lex Luthor play more of a role in the Superman titles. Also bring back some villains that give Superman a challenge, like Silver Banshee, Parasite, Blaze and Mister Z. It's about time someone got him off that Island and get back to his evil self. With Immonen on this title, I look forward to this book really being an "action" comic.

DOUD OHMER
COVINGTON, KY

So, you wanna see more Lex in these pages, huh? Let's see, how does assassinating the Mayor and having a baby daughter in the space of one issue sound? And his appearance in ACTION #741 was a hoot, especially when Supes gave him a good dig. As for your other suggestions, we just saw Parasite, Blaze was last seen in POWER OF SHAZAM! and Silver Banshee has a special one-shot in the works. And yeah, it ***has*** *been a while since we saw Mister Z, hasn't it? We'll keep that in mind, Doud. Thanks!*

Dear Re:Action:

As I expected, Stuart Immonen's debut as ACTION's author was splendid. I managed to read a story of his recently in an issue of SHOWCASE '96, and he didn't let me come down there, so I had little anxiety when I opened ACTION #738. It was full of...OK, it was full of action, with a capital "A"!

I suddenly feel like a hypocrite, because I've been writing in to all the other Superman magazines and complaining about "too much action, not enough interaction amongst the supporting cast," etc. Here's a chance to clarify my position on comic-book super-powered mayhem: I like it when it *just happens*. I don't like having it explained to me.

I remember a great Stuart-pencilled Superman story in the past year or so that had a super-powered being flying around Metropolis for the whole issue, never speaking a word that we could understand. In fact, I remember it being a largely dialogue-free issue. The action was fun to

watch and needed no explanation. My hope for Stuart's run on ACTION, and for the other Superman writers, is that when they feel the need to have a super-stunt or super-battle, that they'll do it in such a way that we won't have to be *told* what's going on. This is a *visual* medium, right? Just because you *can* show us the characters thinking doesn't mean you *should*!

With ACTION #738, Stuart managed to give us mostly action with little internal explanation. I look forward to the day when all of the writers will be able to have Supes do his stuff in a creative enough way that they can ease up on the silly science of "how Superman does what he does." What were those lessons in Creative Writing 101 I had last semester? "Show, don't tell." Just *show* us Superman in action!

Apart from all that, the issue was great. Stuart's beautiful Lois is one of the best in the biz, and I hope she makes it into every issue. I'd love to see Stuart one day do a "Lois and Clark" miniseries, showing us in page after page what their marriage is really like.

Finally, Jimmy gets somewhere in his flight from Intergang. The Hairies! I can't wait to see what happens next with that. I'm currently rereading the entire run of Jack Kirby's JIMMY OLSEN. Let's have Mr. Action spend some time with these guys! Maybe even date one of the Wild-Bunch women, still stuck in her retro-sixties ways?

DUANE HITCHCOCK
SANTEE, CA

Jimmy and Misa seem to be hitting it off somewhat, Duane, so you never know. And the dialogue-lite issue you're thinking of was ADVENTURES #528, which was one of my favorite issues, too, for exactly the same reason you point out—in that case, less was more. Therefore, don't say another word; just enjoy this month's Baldy!

Dear DC:

Y'know, I always thought that Stuart Immonen was a great choice to pencil Superman. And with ACTION #738, I must commend you all again for seeing just how good a writer he is. Just as I started feeling that the Superbooks were becoming somewhat stagnant (despite the new costume angle), you have Immonen write ACTION and get me all fired up again. How'd you know he was this good? What else had he written before this?

It's funny, but maybe you should call this book "INTER-" ACTION, since that's exactly what Immonen's strength was in this issue. Lois and Clark's dialogue was really inspired—not that it was brand-new, but I haven't seen such good back-and-forth banter between the duo since their honeymoon in MAN OF STEEL #63 and Intergang's return in ADVENTURES #544. You can tell Stuart picked up a lot from his old ADVENTURES co-collaborator Karl Kesel, who I think is the most consistent Super-writer you've got today.

And in case José Marzan thinks I've forgotten him, let me just point out that he's one of the guys who keeps Stuart's art looking so good. Keep it up, José, and maybe you can catch that writer's bug your buddy's got! Thanks, all!

SHAUN BRENNAN
RIDGEWOOD, NJ

Stuart did some writing while working on LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES a few years back, Shaun, and co-wrote ADVENTURES #534, where we saw that he definitely had the stuff for writing. He also penned a King Faraday/Sarge Steel story for SHOWCASE '96 and most recently was the writer of the INFERNO miniseries.

Hmmm...José Marzan, Jr.—writer. Who knows? It certainly worked out well for Karl Kesel, who inked a ton of things before throwing his writer's hat into comics. And now he's doing double duty as writer/inker on SUPERBOY now! Even Jon Bogdanove has been writing more in MAN OF STEEL these days. Perhaps it is a bug... (And because no one noticed it till now, does that make it an "ambush bug"?)

—Mike McAvennie
Breakin' out the cotton balls
for my mouth
to "Godfather" for my new niece,
Stephanie.

It's two times the action with our Men of Steel on this month's cover, thanks to Stuart Immonen, José Marzan, Jr. and Patrick Martin!

COMING ATTRACTIONS:

NEXT WEEK: Break out a really big welcome mat for the Millennium Giants in MAN OF STEEL #78, or they might step on you! Jon Bogdanove and Dennis Janke unleash their fury in seven days!

ALSO NEXT WEEK: With the Millennium Giants clobbering Superman Red and Blue, our Men Beyond Tomorrow are gonna need some help. Hopefully, they'll find some as our story crosses over into AQUAMAN #43 and CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN #15!

IN TWO WEEKS: Looks like Red and Blue are gonna need a lot more help than they figured in SUPERMAN #134, especially when the Giants just totally trash them! Dan Jurgens, Ron Frenz and Joe Rubinstein call for more troops in fourteen days!

ALSO IN TWO WEEKS: While one Giant is ganged up on in Egypt in TEEN TITANS #19, the Maid of Might goes solo against another one near England in SUPERGIRL #20!

IN THREE WEEKS: Superboy, Steel and the JLA join Red, Blue and all the heroes already helping out in ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #557! If they don't stop these Giants now, there're gonna be some awfully big footprints embedded in Markovia! It's so big that Karl and Barbara Kesel, guest penciller Val Semeiks and Denis Rodier might not be able to contain it all in twenty-one days!

ALSO IN THREE WEEKS: STEEL turns 50! Unfortunately, the Millennium Giants might blow his and his fellow heroes' candles out for good unless someone comes up with a plan. John Irons has one, but he's afraid it might put Earth in even greater danger! Decisions, decisions...

IN FOUR WEEKS: Superman Red and Blue must learn to work as one in ACTION #744, but don't bet the bank on their doing that anytime soon. Stuart Immonen, guest penciller Anthony Williams and José Marzan, Jr. start bringing this Giant epic to a huge head in twenty-eight days!

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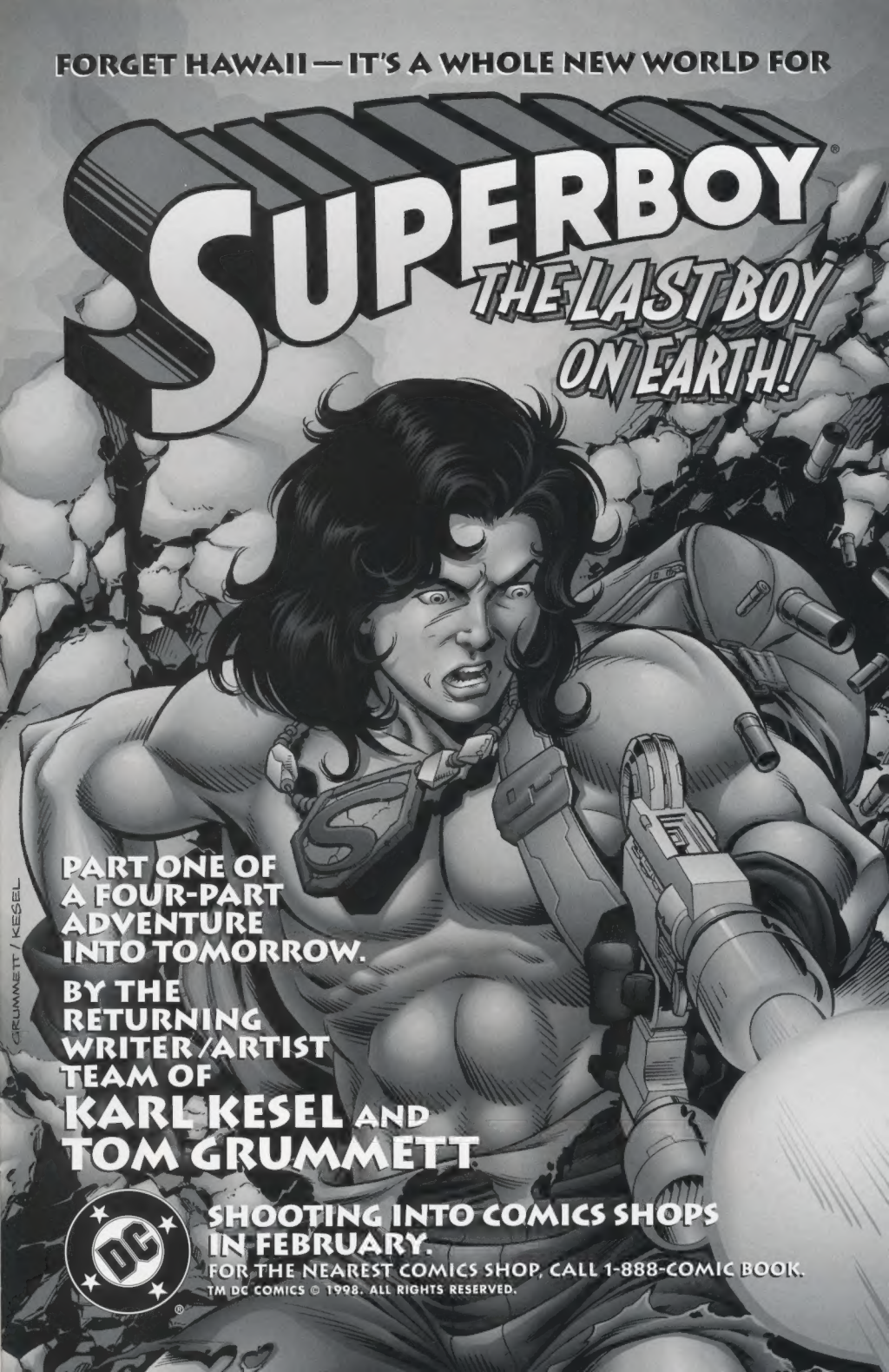
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